

*to Evangelical Religion.*

Monarch is right. But in this contemplation of the whole, it would also take account of the separate condition of each part ; it would perceive that this human world, whatever are its relations to the universe, has its own distinct economy of interests, and stands in its own relation and accountable-ness to the righteous Governor ; and that, regarded in this exclusive view, it is an awful spectacle. Now, to this exclusive sphere of our own condition and interests revelation confines our attention; and pours contempt, though not more than experience pours, on all presumption to reason on those grand unknown principles according to which the Almighty disposes the universe ; all our estimates therefore of the state and relations of man must take the subject on this insulated ground. Considering man in this view, the sacred oracles have represented him as a more melancholy object than Nineveh or Babylon in ruins ; and an infinite aggregate of obvious facts confirms the doctrine. This doctrine then is absolute authority in our speculations on human nature. But to this authority the writers in question seem to pay, and to teach their readers to pay, but little respect. And unless those readers are pre-occupied by the grave convictions of religious truth, rendered still more grave by painful reflection on themselves, and by observation on mankind; or unless they are capable of enjoying a malicious or misanthropic pleasure, like Mandeville and Swift, in detecting and exposing the degradation of our nature, it is not wonderful that they should be prompt to entertain the sentiments which insinuate a much more flattering estimate. Our elegant and amusing moralists no doubt copiously describe and censure the follies and vices of mankind ; but many of these, they maintain, are accidental to the human character, rather than a disclosure of intrinsic qualities. Others do indeed spring radically from the nature; but they are only the wild weeds of a virtuous soil. Man is still a very dignified and noble being, with strong dispositions to all excellence, holding a proud eminence in the ranks of existence, and (if such a Being is adverted to) high in the favour of his Creator. The measure of virtue in the world vastly exceeds that of depravity ; we should not indulge a fanatical rigour in our judgments of mankind ; nor be always reverting to an ideal perfection ; nor accustom ourselves to contemplate the Almighty always in the dark majesty of